(b) The Government is reviewing the network of Passport Offices with a view to improving the provision of passport services. The review will consider the need for additional passport offices, their location and priority as also the availability of necessary additional financial and manpower resources.

(c) The passport offices do not maintain region-wise record of number of applications received. It is, therefore, not possible to furnish the information asked for.

(d) Yes, Sir. During the year 1990 and 1991, Passport Office, Ahmedabad received total number of 162,559 and 209,005 applications respectively for issue of fresh passports and other passport services.

Reported Statement of Dalai Lama on Tibet and China

4686. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the statement of Dalai Lama as reported in the Hindustan Times of 2nd August, 1992 about Government's policy towards China and Tibet;

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto;

(c) what steps Government have so far taken for the rehabilitation of Tibetans and preservation of their culture taking into account the spiritual aspects; and

(d) the extent of financial help and details of the assistance given to them per annum?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Yes, Sir. Government has seen the statement of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as reported in the Hindustan Times of August 2, 1992.

(b) Government recognises Tibet to be an autonomous region of China. It respects the Dalai Lama as a religious and spiritual leader. Government have consistently held the view that issues concerning Tibet should be settled through peaceful dialogue between the Chinese Government and the Tibetan people.

(c) Since 1959, Government have spent substantial amounts and made effective arrangements for the rehabilitation of the Tibetan refugees. These rehabilitation measures have included establishment of Tibetan settlements in various parts of India and of Schools for Tibetan children, grant of permission to establish Tibetan monsteries and other institutions of religious learning and provision of avenues for self-employment for the Tibetans. This assistance has been free of any pressure for assimilation, and has thus permitted the Tibetan refugees to preserve their traditional culture.

(d) About Rs. 46 lakhs per annum is spent on this establishment of the Dalai Lama, an average of about Rs. 3.5 crores per year for Tibetan schools in various parts of India, an average of Rs. 1.25 lakhs per annum for the Tibet House in New Delhi and other Tibetan cultural activities and an average of Rs. 50 lakhs per annum for rehabilitation measures.

Commercial sections of foreign Missions

4687. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:

SHRI ANANTRAY DEV SHANKER DAVE:

SHRI SARADA MOHANTY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that commercial sections of all our foreign mission are highly understaffed and poorly equipped;